

77-3072/18

2 June 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Paul Walsh
A/DDI

SUBJECT: Frank Snepp's Request for a Classified DDI
Document

1. In response to the DCI's commitment to Snepp to review the document in question for declassification, [redacted] and [redacted] have reviewed the attached intelligence memorandum and have recommended that it be declassified and provided to Snepp. As you can see from the EA/DDO's comments to me, the DDO has no objection to declassification with one exception, which they have explained.

2. I have discussed this with [redacted]. We feel the best way to proceed is to have the DDI's FOIA mechanism physically declassify the document in accordance with any procedures applicable to an FOIA request. It should then be provided to [redacted] for release to Snepp.

[redacted]
Assistant to the Deputy Director

Attachment:
ER 77-3072/17

cc: A/DDO
Deputy General Counsel

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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET
Approved For Release 2004/01/21 : CIA-RDP80M00165A001600200006-0

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Executive Registry

77-3072/17

FROM:

EA/DDO

EXTENSION

9203

NO.

DD/O 77-4793/2

DATE

2 June 1977

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1. Assistant to DDCI

6/2

Juc

The Operations Directorate has reviewed the attached classified document concerning U.S. intelligence analyses of Vietnam. From the point of view of sources and methods, we find no compromising revelations except for

25X1
STAT

25X1
25X1

STAT

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With this minor editorial change, we would have no objection to the release of this document.

cc: C/EA -
DDO Reg
EA/DDO
DLD

FORM

610

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SUBJECT: (Optional)

FROM:

EA/DDO

EXTENSION

9203

NO.

DD/O 77-4793

DATE

25 May 1977

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

OFFICER'S
INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1.

C/EA

25 MAY 1977

7

2.

3.

DCEA

26 May 76

4.

27 MAY 1977

5/31

8

31 MAY 1977

9

31 MAY 1977

10

Frank Snapp has asked for release of a classified document concerning U.S. intelligence analyses on Vietnam which he apparently helped draft while he was still in this Agency. A copy of this document is attached. The ADDI has referred this to his Vietnam hands and you will note that they all recommend declassification and release of this document in full to Mr. Snapp. The ADDI has asked the DDO, however, whether we concur. A particular point that is obviously relevant to us is whether this compromises or endangers any of our sources. Would you please have someone review this document and forward a recommendation to Bill concerning its declassification and release.

STAT

Action
By Hand cc

cc: DDO Reg
EA/DDO
DLD

5-6: I have marked with a paper clip a number of passages which are subject to possible sanitization. I have actually sanitized a very few passages.

FORM
3-62

610

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D R A F T

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Effectiveness of US Intelligence Analysis on Vietnam,
December 1974 - April 1975

KEY POINTS

- American intelligence made a continuous, voluminous, and high quality input to US policy makers in the months immediately preceding the end of the war in Vietnam.
- In December 1974, a National Intelligence Estimate correctly assessed North Vietnamese strategy and plans for the first half of 1975.
- This NIE concluded that in response to a major opportunity the communists might launch an all-out offensive to exploit the situation.
- The consequences of Thieu's ill-planned and poorly executed decision in mid-March to retrench militarily gave Hanoi such an opportunity, and the North Vietnamese quickly exploited it.
- The criticality of US military assistance, or lack thereof, was emphasized as a key factor conditioning both South Vietnam's will to resist and North Vietnam's willingness to escalate the level of fighting.
- The record is not without some deficiencies, but they were minor:
 - Early on, the resiliency of the South Vietnamese forces was overestimated.
 - There was an initial tendency to underestimate the speed and success with which the communists would move to exploit the situation.
- Within three weeks of Thieu's mid-March decision, however, the intelligence community concluded that South Vietnam's fate was sealed and that within a short time North Vietnam would emerge victorious.
- Beginning in early April 1975, the community concluded that the best the non-communists could obtain would be a negotiated surrender on

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STAT per

date 3 June 1977 Approved For Release 2004/01/21 : CIA-RDP80M00165A001600200006-0

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- "The communists appear to be ruling out any consideration of a genuine negotiation of the conflict. At a press conference in Saigon Saturday, the Viet Cong spokesman carefully avoided mentioning negotiations with the present government or even a reconstituted one such as they had been demanding."
- "An equally tough line reportedly emerged from a secret briefing of senior communist officials in COSVN [in April.] A reliable source stated that COSVN believed the 'whole thing' would be finished in a short time and that the communists would not agree to enter into negotiations, nor would they join any tripartite coalition government."

April 22, 1975, DCI Briefing for WSAG Meeting, "Vietnam"

- At this point the communists' public response to President Thieu's resignation gives no encouragement to the prospects for negotiations.
- In short, the communists appear to be telling us that a totally new South Vietnamese government and a quick and total US withdrawal will be the price for surrender.
- For Saigon, there simply may not be enough time left for the round of political maneuvering that is already underway.

April 22, 1975, Daily Intelligence Publication:

- "The communists have ruled out any real compromise settlement, implying that nothing less than total surrender would be acceptable. Initial communist reaction to the Thieu resignation has continued this line. A Viet Cong spokesman in Paris has been quoted as stating that before negotiations could be considered, the US must "halt all interference in Vietnam" and that not only Thieu "but also his whole regime must be overthrown."
- "At this point, the very best a new South Vietnamese government might obtain is a negotiated surrender. Given the proximity of communist military forces to Saigon -- and the very real prospect of a rapid disintegration of South Vietnamese military will in the wake of Thieu's resignation -- time may already have run out for any such orderly transfer of power."

- A16 -

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OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP

| TO | NAME AND ADDRESS | DATE | INITIALS |
|----|---------------------------------|------|----------|
| 1 | ADDI, Paul V. Walsh 7E44 Hqs | | ✓ |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | |
| 6 | | | |

| | | |
|-------------|--------------|----------------|
| ACTION | DIRECT REPLY | PREPARE REPLY |
| APPROVAL | DISPATCH | RECOMMENDATION |
| COMMENT | FILE | RETURN |
| CONCURRENCE | INFORMATION | SIGNATURE |

Remarks:

I am returning herewith the material regarding Frank Snapp's request which we took care of on Friday. At Tab A is a copy of the package as you initially gave it to me. At Tab B is a copy of a transmittal note hand-delivered to Deputy General Counsel [redacted] at about 1430 on Friday, together with a "sanitized" copy of the document for delivery to Snapp. The "sanitization" consisted simply of a minor amendment of the text on page A16 of the Annex.

I am providing DDA/IPS a copy of both the sanitized and unsanitized versions of the document.

FOLD HERE TO RETURN TO SENDER

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------|
| FROM: NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NO. | | DATE |
| [redacted] DDI/FIO 2E6104 Hqs | | 6/6/77 |
| UNCLASSIFIED | CONFIDENTIAL | SECRET |

FORM NO. 1-67 237

Use previous editions

USGPO: 1976 - 202-953

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SUBJECT: (Optional)

Material for release to Frank Snepp

FROM:

DDI/FIO

2E6104 Hqs

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE 3 June 1977

STAT

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

OFFICER'S
INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1. Deputy General Counsel

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15.

Forwarded here is a sanitized copy of the document for Frank Snepp asked for in a conversation with the DCI and which the DCI agreed to have reviewed for declassification. ADDI Paul Walsh asked me to deliver a copy to you prepared for release to Frank Snepp. For your information, the only change in the document in connection with

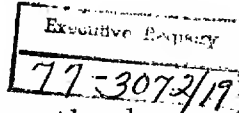
6/3/77

DDI/FIO

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MEMORANDUM FOR:

DDCI



In response to your inquiry, the document Mr. Snepp requested is in the process of being declassified and will soon be on its way to him. I discussed with [redacted] who will tell Snepp the memo is on its way.



3 June 1977
Date

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DDA: *AM*
P. Carle

U-1.20

31 May 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Conversation with Mr. Frank Snepp

Mr. Snepp called me during the evening of 30 May to inquire what, if anything, had transpired from his conversation with the Director. I told him that I was unaware of any specific action except for a new look at the issue he raised concerning [redacted] Snepp said that he had received a letter from [redacted] which he was in the process of drafting a reply (he offered no details on this subject). Snepp closed the brief conversation by stating that he would be travelling quite a bit in the future and that he would be calling me periodically to maintain contact.

[redacted]

Chief, Africa Division, ORPA

Distribution:

Original: DDCI, Mr. Knoche
cc: Mr. Robert Gambino
Mr. Ted Shackley

[redacted]

*George — is
Someone to be
supposed to be
looking at the
declassification of a
memo requested by
Snepp.
Let's get
on this. HR*

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OGC 77-3481

31 May 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant to the Deputy Director of Central
Intelligence [REDACTED]

STAT

FROM : [REDACTED]
Deputy General Counsel

SUBJECT : Frank Warren Snepp III

1. I talked to Snepp by telephone this morning. He had been away for several days and I had been unable to reach him. First he assured me that he would respond immediately to my letter of 24 May 1977, which requested him to confirm in writing that he understood and would comply with the provisions of his Secrecy Agreement in connection with the possible publication of his book.

25X1

3. In response to a further question from him, I told him that the declassification review of the OCI memorandum on essentials of reporting from Saigon in the last two months was under way. He also noted that he thought the Director had indicated he (the DCI) would be responsive to further requests from Snepp for material which would help him with his book. I told him that we would consider any such request and that he could direct it to me.

4. The conversation was completely amicable and friendly, and it seems that for the moment we have taken the edge off his complaints.

STAT